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Date: 20 MAR 1978

By:

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, General Services Office
Career Service Board

FROM : Chairman, CIA Career Service Board

SUBJECT : Career Service Letter No. 1

It has come to my attention that the Career Service Boards desire guidance on certain matters under their cognizance. This is in the nature of such guidance. If this missive proves of interest and value, it will be followed by others.

1. It should be recognized that Career Service Boards are advisory to the Executive in charge of the office. Their mission is stated in Regulation . Their job is to assist each office in developing its part of the CIA career service. The Agency Personnel regulations lay down the policy on most matters, and each Career Service Board member should be thoroughly familiar with these regulations. But Career Service Boards go further than the cold printed word of regulations. They are the embodiment of the Agency's desire to encourage all employees to make their work with this organization a career; the Agency's recognition that skilled personnel are CIA's most valuable asset; the assurance to all employees that their future is under the watchful and understanding eye of associates who are directly interested in and concerned by their accomplishments.

2. It should be understood that everybody in the Agency is not a career employee, although everybody has an equal opportunity to become one. A certain percentage of employees are probationary--some of these will not qualify for career service, and others will lose their interest. Another group of employees are here by agreement or preference only for limited periods. Only those who are qualified and dedicated to a career service will be so considered.

3. There appears to be some confusion about promotion policy. While it is inadvisable to lay down arbitrary rules about the time in grade required for promotions, it is, nevertheless, only practical that a fairly uniform practice be followed by the different offices. It is, therefore, suggested that the following rule of thumb be used--up through GS-9, at least six months in grade; from GS-9 through GS-15, a year or more in grade.

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BUT the most important factor that should be understood by all Career Service Boards and stressed by them to all supervisors is that promotions are based on demonstrated ability to perform work of a higher grade, and are not given simply for serving in grade a certain period of time. Further, there should be complete frankness with all employees on the subject of their capabilities and chances of advancement--that is what PER (the Personnel Evaluation Report) is for--use it.

In fact, we may soon reach the stage, particularly in higher grades, where promotions will be on a competitive basis.

4. Career planning is one of the most vital aspects of Career Service Board work. We should strive toward the goal of mapping out for each individual a career program extending several years in advance, recognizing, of course, that demands of the Agency or failure of the individual to measure up might alter the program. Employees should be given all possible opportunities to broaden the base of their careers by gaining experience in different offices of the Agency. If, for example, an ONE careerist desires experience in FI, is qualified and can be utilized, he should get that tour of duty, retaining his career designation of ONE but being judged by the FI supervisor on his performance while doing FI work. Also, changes in career designation should be granted where the individual desires and the gaining board concurs.

5. Training will play an increasingly vital role in the development of our career service. Career Service Boards when considering reassignments and promotions should give careful evaluation to the training the individual has received. This not only includes the courses offered by the Office of Training, but also the opportunities offered Agency personnel to attend the National War College, Armed Forces Staff College, and the Army, Navy and Air War College. These service courses, which are open only to the most highly qualified individuals, are important to those Agency personnel who are to serve under or be closely associated with military commands.

6. The Career Service Boards should give adequate attention to developing the possibilities for women making a career with the Agency, and to insure that the steps up the professional ladder are always open to qualified and able women.

7. Finally, it is the desire of the CIA Career Service Board to reduce to the absolute minimum the volume of paper work sent to the other Career Service Boards. It is recognized that during these early stages a certain amount of the development of our program must be on a trial and error basis. However, it is hoped that soon the principles

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will be well established, and the boards will have all of the necessary material with which to work. We hope that by September we can present a paper to all employees on the subject "What Career Service in the Central Intelligence Agency Means to You". We would be pleased to have members of any Career Service Board attend as observers the regularly scheduled meetings of this Board.

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LYMAN B. KIRKPATRICK
Chairman
CIA Career Service Board

- 3 -

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